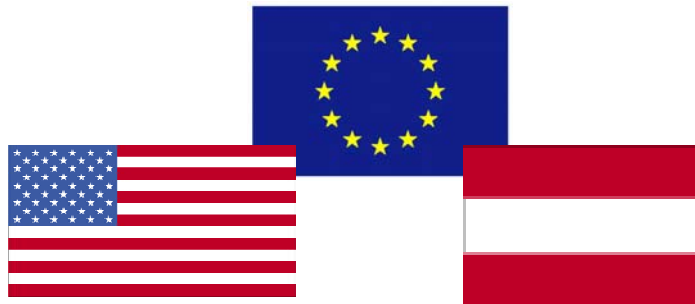


# EU SPOTLIGHT

No. 6, May 2006



Österreich 2006 • Präsidentschaft der Europäischen Union  
Austria 2006 • Presidency of the European Union  
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- [U.S. Government Items](#)
- [CRS Reports for Congress](#)
- [Media and Think Tank Items](#)
- **Austrian Government Items**
  - [Event](#)
  - [Press Releases and Speeches](#)
- [Eurobarometer](#)
- [Useful Links](#)
  - [Government pages](#)
  - [Selected U.S. media with EU section](#)
  - [Selected Austrian media with EU section](#)
  - [Additional sites](#)

## U.S. GOVERNMENT ITEMS

### [Incremental WTO Deal Not Acceptable to U.S., Official Says](#)

#### **USTR's Schwab, in Paris for OECD meeting, reacts to EU "sweeteners" offer**

Washington File, May 24, 2006

Washington -- A top U.S. trade official has reiterated that any World Trade Organization (WTO) agreement that opens markets only slightly would not get U.S. support.

At an Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) meeting in Paris May 24, Deputy U.S. Trade Representative Susan Schwab said the United States remains determined to conclude the long-stalled negotiations successfully in 2006.

"We can only achieve success if the negotiations produce significant, new market opportunities," Schwab said, adding that the United States wants "real results, not just 'cuts on paper.'"

U.S. Senate confirmation is expected within days for Schwab to succeed departing U.S. Trade Representative Rob Portman.

Schwab made her statement on the second day of the annual OECD ministers' meeting.

European Union (EU) trade commissioner Peter Mandelson had previously said his bloc would be willing to improve slightly its offer to cut agricultural tariffs if other WTO members made more concessions. ...

#### [STATEMENT BY DEPUTY USTR SCHWAB AT THE OECD MINISTERIAL](#)

#### [CONFERENCE TRADE SESSION](#), Paris, May 24, 2006

#### [STATEMENT BY DEPUTY U.S. TRADE REPRESENTATIVE PETER F. ALLGEIER ON](#)

#### [THE DOHA DEVELOPMENT AGENDA](#), May 23, 2006

### [White House Report, May 23: Iran, U.K./Iraq, Honduras, Personnel](#)

#### **Bush Administration repeats support for European efforts to deal with Iran**

Washington File, May 23, 2006

White House Says Iran Must Renounce Nuclear Weapons Program Before It Will Discuss Incentives

White House press secretary Tony Snow expressed support for European and international efforts to engage Iran, including offering incentives, to find a peaceful and diplomatic resolution to the international impasse over the Iranian nuclear program, but said the United States is not "making any proffers" to Iran at this time.

Regarding press reports that Iran could be offered commercial aircraft for purchase in exchange for abandoning its nuclear fuel-cycle program, Snow told reporters May 23 that Iran first "has to make that declaration."

The Bush administration has supported activities of the Europeans and other negotiating partners "all along" in their efforts to get Iran to abandon its nuclear weapons ambitions, he said. ...

### [United States Streamlines Import Restrictions on EU Swine](#)

#### **Changes will improve U.S.-EU trade relations, Agriculture Department says**

Washington File, May 20, 2006

Washington -- A final rule setting uniform importation requirements for swine and swine products from the European Union (EU) was adopted by the U.S. Department of Agriculture May 19.

The rule, which takes effect June 19, amends restrictions related to safeguarding against classical swine fever (CSF) by setting the same standards for all 15 EU member states, effectively expanding the list of EU nations recognized as part of a region at low risk for CSF. The department indicated that the change particularly would benefit Luxemburg and parts of Germany and Italy not previously recognized as free of CSF.

Although the effect on U.S. industries will be minor, the rule is expected "to lead more generally to improved trade relations between the United States and the EU," according to the department's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS). ...

#### [IMPORTATION OF SWINE AND SWINE PRODUCTS FROM THE EUROPEAN UNION](#),

#### **Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service/U.S. Department of Agriculture, May 19, 2006**

### [Review of European Security Issues](#)

Washington File, May 16, 2006

Montenegro referendum; NATO summit; Albania, Croatia, Macedonia; Bosnian Constitution; Kosovo status talks; share bases in Bulgaria; U.S. Navy rollback in Britain; U.S. report to U.N. anti-torture committee

### **Congress Passes Bill Ending WTO Export Tax Break Dispute with EU**

#### **Pending EU sanctions against United States expected to be withdrawn**

Washington File, May 12, 2006

Washington -- The Senate has given final passage to a tax-cut bill that includes repeal of corporate tax breaks that the World Trade Organization (WTO) has ruled are illegal export subsidies.

Passage of the provision ends a long-standing trade dispute, and a European Union (EU) official has indicated pending retaliatory trade sanctions against the United States would be suspended.

The Senate passed the five-year, \$70 billion tax bill 54-44 late May 11, a day after the House of Representatives passed it 244-185. President Bush has indicated he will sign the bill, which includes tax cuts he long has sought.

At issue are remnant tax breaks from the Foreign Sales Corporation (FSC) and the successor Extraterritorial Income Exclusion Act (ETI). After the WTO ruled in cases brought by the EU that those credits violated a subsidies agreement, Congress repealed nearly all of them over a two-year transition ending in 2006. ...

### **The United States and the European Union: A Renewed Partnership Delivering Results**

#### **Remarks by Kurt Volker, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary, European and Eurasian Affairs**

Conference on "New Instruments of International Governance: Transatlantic and Global Perspectives", Diplomatic Academy, Vienna, May 11, 2006

... the European Union and the United States are working together as never before. And this strategic partnership is producing results worldwide, in support of freedom and democracy, advancing prosperity, and building global security.

...Underneath all of our common actions in facing today's global challenges is one simple and powerful idea: the idea that people have a right to live in freedom. They have a right to have their human dignity respected, and to be protected by the law; to choose their leaders; to pursue their own prosperity; to do the best they can to support their families and their nations.

These are the ideas upon which my nation was founded - ideas that came from Europe and which we - the United States and Europe - share today. ...

**BUSH VISIT TO VIENNA IN JUNE TO FOCUS ON U.S.-EU ISSUES**, Washington File, May 19, 2006

### **Rice Says Iran's Letter Was "Not a Serious Diplomatic Overture"**

#### **Iran faces "isolation" if nuclear program does not meet international standards**

Washington File, May 10, 2006

Washington – Iranian President Mahmud Ahmadi-Nejad's letter to President Bush was "not a serious diplomatic overture," Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice said during a series of morning television interviews May 10.

Meeting later in the morning with Javier Solana, the European Union's representative on security and foreign policy, Rice said Iran continues to face "two options that have been there all along, which is that they can have a civil nuclear program that is appropriate and that the international community supports or they can face isolation." ...

Rice said there is "complete agreement" in the U.N. Security Council "that Iran cannot have a nuclear weapon and complete agreement that the Security Council needs to send a strong message." However, she said, "We have some tactical differences on how that message might be sent."

For that reason, she said, "our allies, particularly the Europeans, thought that it would be a good idea to continue for a couple of weeks to lay out a very clear course for the Iranians that says, 'Here's the path in which you get a civil nuclear program that's acceptable to the international community. Here is the path in which you end up isolated.'" ...

**INTERVIEW ON ABC'S GOOD MORNING AMERICA**, New York City, May 10, 2006

**INTERVIEW ON FOX & FRIENDS**, New York City, May 10, 2006

**INTERVIEW ON NBC'S TODAY SHOW**, New York City, May 10, 2006

## **EU, Latin American Leaders Urged To Protect Press in Americas**

### **Press group criticizes attacks on media in Cuba, Venezuela**

Washington File, May 10, 2006

Washington -- Leaders attending a May 11-13 European Union (EU) - Latin America/Caribbean Summit in Vienna, Austria, are being urged to do more to protect press freedom in the Americas. In a May 10 statement, the Paris-based press advocacy group Reporters Without Borders said press freedom in the Americas "has taken a beating during the past year or so."

The group said seven journalists in the Americas were murdered in connection with their work in 2005 and five more have been killed since the start of 2006.

"Most of these murders are still unpunished. Physical attacks, harassment and censorship of the media are all common practice, sometimes with the support of local politicians and judicial officials," said Reporters Without Borders. At the same time, the group said "we welcome the efforts undertaken in some countries to provide better guarantees for press freedom and free expression, especially by means of legislative reform. These efforts must continue and we hope they will get help from the European Union." ...

## **Bill Would Repeal Remaining U.S. Export Credits Ruled Out by WTO**

### **Ahead of EU sanctions, House and Senate conferees add provision to tax bill**

Washington File, May 10, 2006

Washington -- In a surprise development, members of Congress have inserted into a high-priority tax-cut bill repeal of certain export credits that the World Trade Organization (WTO) has ruled illegal.

The House of Representatives was expected to vote on the bill late May 10, and the Senate within a few days afterward, before the European Union (EU) imposes on May 16 retaliatory trade sanctions approved by the WTO.

If Congress passes the bill, President Bush is considered likely to sign it because it contains tax-cut measures he long has sought.

House and Senate conferees had worked for months to resolve their differences over the five-year bill, which would extend lower tax rates on investments and prevent millions of middle-income taxpayers from becoming subject to a higher alternative minimum tax.. ...

## **Official Defends Proposal on Foreign Investment in U.S. Airlines**

### **Transportation Department's Shane explains effect on EU open skies pact**

Washington File, May 9, 2006

Washington -- A top U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) official tried to defend before a Senate subcommittee a proposal for giving foreign investors some opportunity to influence commercial decisions at U.S. airlines.

Deputy Transportation Secretary Jeffrey Shane told a Senate Commerce subcommittee May 9 that the Bush administration proposal, revised just days earlier, would not remove actual control of any U.S. airline from U.S. investors.

He added that the European Union (EU) decision on approving an open-skies aviation agreement with the United States depends on the outcome of the rule-making. The EU reportedly has pushed back its decision on the pact from June to October.

"That agreement has the potential to fundamentally transform the framework for transatlantic air services, dramatically increasing the quality of competition in the market," Shane said. "It would benefit U.S. airlines, consumers and communities on both sides of the Atlantic, transcending anything we have yet achieved through our existing open-skies accords." ...

**STATEMENT OF JEFFREY N. SHANE (pdf), Under Secretary of Transportation for Policy, Department of Transportation, before the Subcommittee on Aviation, U.S. Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, May 9, 2006**

**PROPOSAL – ACTUAL CONTROL OF U.S. AIR CARRIERS (pdf), U.S. Department of Transportation, May 3, 2006**

## **Quartet Press Conference**

Secretary Condoleezza Rice

New York City, May 9, 2006

*Press Conference with United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan; His Excellency Javier Solana, Secretary General of the Council of the European Union and High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy; European Union*

*External Relations Commissioner Benita Ferrero-Waldner; Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs Sergei Lavrov; and Austrian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ursula Plassnik.*

...SECRETARY RICE: We have the deepest respect for Mahmoud Abbas and I think you can see it throughout this statement. We respect him for what he has tried to do for the Palestinian people, for his personal integrity and for the fact that he has condemned terrorism and tried to lead the Palestinian people along the roadmap. So I think the Quartet has the deepest respect for him.

We have a new situation on the ground. There have been elections in both the Palestinian territories and in Israel. The circumstances politically in the Palestinian territories are complicated. What we are committed to is that we would like to see the political conditions evolve in a way that would permit a return to the roadmap and, indeed, that would permit parties to reengage each other on how to get to a two state solution. But I think it is early to start to prescribe precisely how that is going to go forward. ....

[QUARTET STATEMENT ON MIDDLE EAST PEACE](#), Text released by the United Nations, New York City, 9 May 2006

### [New Members Vital to NATO, EU, Cheney Tells Adriatic Leaders](#)

#### **U.S. supports Croatia, Albania, Macedonia in full trans-Atlantic membership**

Washington File, May 7, 2006

Washington -- Vice President Cheney says that the United States supports the aspirations of Croatia, Albania and Macedonia to become full members of the Euro-Atlantic community, including their goals of joining both NATO and the European Union.

He spoke at a meeting with prime ministers Ivo Sanader of Croatia, Vlado Buckovski of Macedonia and Sali Berisha of Albania in Dubrovnik, Croatia, on May 7.

"It's very important -- both for NATO and the EU -- to take in new members," Cheney said at their meeting in Dubrovnik's Excelsior Hotel. "Those who aspire to join and rejuvenate such organizations, he continued, "help us rededicate ourselves to those basic fundamental values of freedom and democracy that are a very important part of our collective security arrangements." ...

[REMARKS AT A MEETING OF THE ADRIATIC 3 LEADERS](#), Vice President Cheney, Prime Minister Ivo Sanader of Croatia, Prime Minister Vlado Buckovski of Macedonia, and Prime Minister Sali Berisha of Albania, The Excelsior Hotel, Dubrovnik, Croatia, May 7, 2006

[VICE PRESIDENT'S REMARKS](#) at a Dinner with Prime Minister Ivo Sanader of Croatia, The Nautica Restaurant, Dubrovnik, Croatia, May 6, 2006



### [U.S.-EU Partnership Transcends War on Terror, Bush Says](#)

#### **Fighting diseases, stopping nuclear proliferation among areas of cooperation**

Washington File, May 7, 2006

Washington -- The relationship between the United States and Europe is "a vital partnership that transcends the war on terror," President Bush says.

"Part of our relationship is working together in the war on terror. But there are many other areas where we can and will continue to work together," including enhancing trade, fighting infectious diseases, stopping nuclear proliferation and resolving the situation in the Darfur region of Sudan, Bush said in a May 7 interview with *Bild*, Germany's largest newspaper.

"[W]hen the United States and Europe cooperate, we can achieve security for our people, and enhance the prosperity for our people ... as well as do our duty" to help relieve the suffering of those who are less fortunate, he said. ...

[INTERVIEW OF THE PRESIDENT](#) by Kai Diekmann of BILD, The White House, May 5, 2006

[INTERVIEW OF THE PRESIDENT](#) by Sabine Christiansen of ARD German Television, May 4, 2006

### [Prepared Remarks of Attorney General Alberto R. Gonzales](#) at the Vienna E.U. Interior Ministers Conference



Vienna, Austria, May 5, 2006

... Let me begin by paying tribute to the critical role that the European Union and other nations gathered here today have played in fighting terrorism. Many of you, and your citizens, have suffered at the hands of terrorists for far longer than the United States. And that suffering has continued on the streets of London, Madrid, and more locations and countries too numerous to mention here. Whether under the banner of Al Qaeda, or that of the Red Brigades, the "Continuity IRA", ETA, or other groups, the end is the same: perpetual violence designed to undermine democracy and the rule of law.

And in part because of Europe's long experience in combating terrorism, I understand many of you and your citizens view terrorism generally as a criminal matter, to be dealt with exclusively in your criminal justice systems... and many of you have well developed legal tools to deal with terrorists.

But the September 11th attacks introduced America to a new type of conflict, and to an enemy that has proven capable of creating mass casualties on a scale not previously contemplated. Faced with a highly dangerous adversary, the United States responded by bringing to bear all of our tools to defeat the threat, including, when appropriate, military action. ...

[PREPARED REMARKS OF ATTORNEY GENERAL ALBERTO R. GONZALES](#), at Press Conference with E.U. and Russian Officials, Vienna, Austria, May 4, 2006

[PREPARED REMARKS OF ATTORNEY GENERAL ALBERTO R. GONZALES](#), at the U.S./E.U. Troika Press Conference, Vienna, Austria, May 3, 2006

[WEBPAGE ON VISIT](#) by Attorney General Alberto R. Gonzales, U.S. Department of Justice and Michael P. Jackson, Deputy Secretary, U.S. Department of Homeland Security



### [U.S. Revised Proposed Rule on Airlines Might Delay EU Deal](#)

#### **Transportation Department's changes seek to address congressional concerns**

Washington File, May 4, 2006

Washington -- Under pressure from lawmakers, U.S. transportation regulators have revised a proposed rule on airline investment in a move likely to delay an open skies deal with the European Union (EU).

The original proposed rule would have allowed foreign investors to enter into deals with U.S. airlines, giving them power to make operational decisions concerning, for example, rates and the routes a carrier serves.

That rule was accepted by EU negotiators as a compromise that opened the way to reaching agreement with the United States on the text of the long-sought pact to liberalize trans-Atlantic air services, according to U.S. officials. ...

### [Transcript of Legal Advisor Bellinger's Media Roundtable in Brussels](#)

The United States Mission to the European Union, Brussels, Belgium, May 4, 2006

... Mr. Bellinger: We are acutely aware of the concerns that have been raised both in Europe and around the world about Guantanamo. We don't want to keep Guantanamo open any longer than is necessary. As you know, we have been reducing the numbers. We do not want to be the world's jailers.

A great difficulty is - what is the alternative? There have been a number of voices recently who have called for the closure of Guantanamo, but none of those who have called for the closure of Guantanamo have suggested an alternative. So we know there are a large number of people in Guantanamo who have trained in al-Qaida training camps, trained in terrorist techniques, in bomb making, in chemical weapons manufacture, and the question is what should be done with those people?



We don't have many other countries in the world who are stepping up to say this is a problem for the international community. The United States should not have to shoulder this burden alone. So we are happy to take these individuals. I would dispute your suggestion that it's a violation of international law. We're clearly aware of the concerns people have raised. ...

### **President Bush Welcomes German Chancellor to the White House**

Office of the Press Secretary, The White House

May 3, 2006

PRESIDENT BUSH: ... It's very important that the international community send a clear message to the Iranians that a nuclear weapon is unacceptable. We are pleased that the EU3 has taken such a strong role in this measure. It is part of having a unified message. The United States is actively involved with our partners in achieving this important objective. The first important thing that must be done in achieving an issue diplomatically is for everybody to share a goal. And the goal is clear, and that is the Iranians should not have a nuclear weapon or the capacity to make a nuclear weapon. And that, in itself, is an important diplomatic achievement. ...

And we do disagree, of course. But the disagreements are always in such a way as to make sure that there's a positive relationship, because we both understand relations between Germany and the United States are important for our respective people, important for relationships in Europe, for the United States. It enhances the transatlantic relationship. And by working together we can help solve major problems.....

### **President Bush to Attend U.S.-EU Summit in Vienna, Austria**

Office of the Press Secretary, The White House

May 3, 2006

President Bush will travel to Vienna, Austria to participate in the annual U.S.-EU Summit on June 21, 2006. This trip will underscore the importance of our relationship with the European Union and will provide an opportunity for the President to discuss our transatlantic agenda with European Council President Wolfgang Schuessel and European Commission President Jose Manuel Barroso.

The President and the EU leaders will discuss a wide range of global challenges including preventing nuclear proliferation, combating terrorist financing, assisting reconstruction in Iraq, promoting peace and democracy in Europe and beyond, and increasing prosperity worldwide by reducing trade barriers and addressing energy security.

### **Few Weeks Remain for Success in WTO Negotiations, Official Says**

**USTR's Portman in Geneva reiterates need for better offers to cut tariffs**

Washington File, May 3, 2006

Washington -- U.S. Trade Representative Rob Portman has indicated that any chance of success for the long-stalled World Trade Organization (WTO) negotiations will become clear in the weeks ahead.

"Ultimately the gains will come from liberalizing trade, from opening markets and knocking down barriers," Portman said in Geneva May 3. "We need to move back to that fundamental truth, and I think this next four to six weeks will be the moment of truth."

Portman leads a U.S. delegation to WTO headquarters in Geneva where participants missed the April 30 deadline for agreeing on modalities, or specific formulas and deadlines, to cut agricultural and industrial tariffs and government payments to farmers. ...

He said the United States remains committed to successful conclusion of the negotiations, formally called the Doha Development Agenda.

Portman has been pressing the European Union (EU) and other wealthy countries to embrace deep cuts in agricultural tariffs as the United States proposed in October. ...

**TRANSCRIPT OF PRESS CONFERENCE with USTR Portman, Secretary Johanns and Deputy USTR Schwab on the Doha Development Agenda, Geneva, May 3, 2006**  
**AUDIO FILE**

### **Transatlantic Relations**

**Remarks by Daniel Fried, Assistant Secretary for European and Eurasian Affairs**

National Conference of Editorial Writers, Washington, D.C., May 2, 2006

Assistant Secretary Fried: ...The good news is that the United States and Europe are back together. The bad news is that now that we're back together our reward is to get to deal with the Iran problem and a whole lot of other nasty problems in a very rough world. But if the challenge of Iranian nuclear weapons and the larger challenge of Iran is difficult now, it would be much more difficult – if not impossible – to deal with satisfactorily if the United States and Europe were not back together. This is a profound shift from two or three years ago and a very welcome one.

It doesn't mean that the United States and Europe agree on every single issue. We never did agree on every single issue, including during the golden era of the Cold War, which everybody now looks back to as this wonderful time of transatlantic harmony, but if you were actually living in it every day the news was well, we disagree. We disagreed about pipelines, we disagreed about missiles, we disagreed about arms control, we disagreed hard line, soft line, détente, not détente with the Soviet Union. That was the news every day, and in retrospect we think, wait a minute, we really were pretty well knit up.

The fact is, we are pretty well knit up with Europe now. That is profoundly important. ...

### [U.S., Australian Trade Ministers Urge Flexibility in WTO Talks](#)

#### **Welcome signals from EU on cutting agricultural tariffs**

Washington File, May 2, 2006

U.S. Trade Representative Rob Portman and Australian Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Trade Mark Vaile issued a joint statement May 2 in Geneva on the status of the current round of World Trade Organization talks, also known as the Doha round.

Following is the text of the joint statement as released by the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative:

We are deeply concerned at missing the 30 April deadline for modalities for agriculture and industrial tariffs, and the implications of this for the conclusion of the Doha round. ...

"We will work closely with the EU and other Members to ensure that substantial improvements in market access are complemented by substantial reductions in trade-distorting agricultural domestic support, substantial reductions in industrial tariffs, and meaningful openings in services as part of a balanced and ambitious package for all Members. ...

### [U.S.-European Relations](#)

#### **Press Briefing with Daniel Fried, Assistant Secretary for European and Eurasian Affairs**

U.S. Mission to NATO, Brussels, Belgium, April 29, 2006

Assistant Secretary Fried: ... The central theme of this conference and my principal take-away so far was summed up by Javier Solana's speech at the dinner last night and the panel discussion this morning. That is, and these aren't Solana's exact words, but this is pretty much his sense: Europe and the United States are not arguing about their relationship any more. We are putting that relationship to work in the world to deal with problems that exist outside of Europe. We are knit-up conceptually in terms of values and strategically. And you heard, I think, with Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, Javier Solana this morning, but also Senator McCain and Ambassador Holbrooke, a strong sense of transatlantic common purpose. That's the good news. The bad news is, as a reward for this common purpose, we get to deal with some very nasty problems like Iran. The bad news is the world is a rough place.

But as difficult as Iran is, and I think we all know it is, and you heard that this morning, it would be impossible to deal with Iran if Europe and the United States were not as united as they are, which is considerably. ...

### [Report Cites U.S., EU, Eurasian Counterterrorism Cooperation](#)

#### **Terrorist threat increasingly seen as internal, State Department says**

Washington File, April 28, 2006

Washington – Europe and the United States continue to work in close partnership to counter the terrorist threat, a threat that increasingly is seen as internal, according to the State Department's annual terrorism report.

European Union (EU) member states remained "strong and reliable partners" and Russia continued to intensify its bilateral counterterrorism cooperation with the United States and to play a leadership role in multilateral fora, according to the *Country Reports on Terrorism 2005* released April 28 in Washington....



A key concern, the report says, is the terrorist activity and the presence of terrorist support networks in Europe. "Efforts to combat the threat in Europe were sometimes hampered by legal protections that made it difficult to take firm judicial action against suspected terrorists, asylum laws that afforded loopholes, inadequate legislation, or standards of evidence that limited the use of classified information in holding terrorist suspects."

The report also cites legal difficulties with the new EU arrest warrant in some countries, the ability of terrorists to travel easily between certain EU countries and EU reluctance to block the assets of charities associated with Hamas (also known as the Islamic Resistance Movement) and Hizballah, both of which the United States designates as terrorist groups. ...

**[COUNTRY REPORTS ON TERRORISM 2005](#)**, Office of the Coordinator for Counterterrorism/United States Department of State, April 2006  
**[EUROPE AND EURASIA OVERVIEW](#)** (pdf)

### **[Top U.S. Officials Making Attempt To Revive WTO Negotiations](#)**

#### **USTR's outgoing Portman, incoming Schwab schedule trip to Geneva**

Washington File, April 27, 2006

Washington -- U.S. Trade Representative Rob Portman, serving in his present position a few more weeks, will travel to Geneva to try to get the long-stalled World Trade Organization (WTO) negotiations moving again....

Portman said he was disappointed but not surprised that the WTO negotiations, formally called the Doha Development Agenda, would fail to meet the most recent deadline, April 30. ...

#### **AGRICULTURAL ISSUES REMAIN A STUMBLING BLOCK**

The way forward requires moving the European Union (EU) to break from its position of offering no real additional market access to agriculture, Portman indicated. The United States has done its part in proposing steep cuts in agricultural and industrial tariffs and domestic support for farmers, he said.

"I think what we're asking is very realistic," Portman said. "It's not only realistic; it's the only way to meet the Doha requirement that 149 countries agreed to in 2001 and reaffirmed in 2004." ...

**[INFORMAL MEDIA AVAILABILITY WITH AMBASSADOR ROB PORTMAN](#)**, United States Trade Representative (pdf), April 25, 2006

**[FACT SHEET: WTO DOHA DEVELOPMENT AGENDA – THE U.S. PROPOSAL ON AGRICULTURE](#)** (pdf), Office of the United States Trade Representative, April 2006

### **[Airline Foreign Control Rule Might Be Delayed, U.S. Official Says](#)**

#### **DOT's Shane says more review may be needed to address congressional concerns**

Washington File, April 25, 2006

The U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) might delay adoption of a final rule on foreign ownership of U.S. airlines in response to concerns expressed by some members of Congress and other parties, Under Secretary of Transportation Jeffrey Shane says.

"DOT is exploring whether a further period of review might be justified," Shane told an aviation law conference in The Hague, Netherlands, on April 24.

He added, however, that Transportation Secretary Norman Mineta remains "committed to completing this important rulemaking proceeding."

...Shane said the rule change would influence a decision by the European Union (EU) transport ministers on a U.S.-EU open skies agreement reached in November 2005.

The EU long has sought an open-skies agreement between the two parties conditioned on adoption of the rule changes, according to U.S. officials. ...

### **[Cyprus Division "Has Gone On Too Long," Rice Says in Greece](#)**

#### **U.S. seeks renewed negotiations; secretary heads next to Turkey, then Bulgaria**

Washington File, April 25, 2006

Washington -- Calling Greece and Turkey "pillars of stability in southeastern Europe," U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice said Greece has done "important work" in supporting Turkey's quest for European Union (EU) membership, and she urged renewed negotiations to unify Cyprus.

The de facto division of Cyprus "is something that has gone on far too long," Rice said April 25 during a visit to Athens, Greece, the first visit by a U.S. secretary of state since the 1980s. Rice was scheduled to stop next in Ankara, Turkey, on April 25 and April 26, where she also planned to discuss Cyprus and Turkey's EU membership, along with numerous other topics. In 2004, Greek Cypriot voters rejected a plan by U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan to reunify Turkish

Cypriot communities in the north with Republic of Cyprus communities in the Mediterranean island's south. Turkish Cypriot voters approved the Annan plan.

Following the mixed election, the Republic of Cyprus joined the European Union in 2004 without the republic's government controlling Turkish Cypriot communities. U.N.-brokered negotiations have been put on hold. ...

**REMARKS WITH GREEK FOREIGN MINISTER THEODORA BAKOYANNIS AFTER MEETING, Secretary Condoleezza Rice, April 25, 2006**

**Interview With Michael Grypiotis, Greek State Broadcasting**

**Secretary Condoleezza Rice**

Athens, Greece, April 25, 2006

...QUESTION: And my last question, coming back to the first question actually, when is the time of diplomacy over for Iran?

SECRETARY RICE: I don't see that the diplomacy has run its course by any stretch of the imagination. We're really just beginning in the diplomatic course. The negotiations between the European Union and Iran, then later the entry of Russia into those discussions with a different approach to Iran, that was one phase and it's a phase that we would like to get back to if Iran is going to return to negotiations. But we're now in a more serious phase. That is, that we are in the Security Council. Greece, of course, is a member of the Security Council and has therefore special responsibilities, but we have many tools at our disposal before anyone starts to talk about the end of diplomacy. I'm a firm believer that this diplomatic course is going to work if we stay united, if we show the Iranians that there is no other course, that Iran will reconsider its ways and with enough unity Iran will have no choice but to adhere to the demands of the international system. ...

**Print Roundtable With Greek Journalists**

**Secretary Condoleezza Rice**

Athens, Greece, April 25, 2006

...QUESTION: A question (inaudible) from the former Soviet Union to the Western Europe. I believe that the American Administration does not promote monopolistic situation and the import of natural gas from Azerbaijan, for instance, would be considered under a positive light from the Administration. Is it true?

SECRETARY RICE: Yes, in fact, we would favor very much for Europe as well as for ourselves the diversification both of supply and of type of energy. The fact is that the kind of search for energy based on hydrocarbons -- oil and gas -- has gotten to be very intense over the last several years and it has had an effect of distorting some aspects of international relations as well. I do not think that anyone wants to be in a position of having a monopolistic supplier of energy and so we are encouraging -- and we don't have to do much to encourage, this is a huge topic in the European Union, it was just a topic in the IMF meetings, the G-7 meetings. Everybody understands that diversification of supply is important. ...

**Briefing En Route Athens, Greece**

**Secretary Condoleezza Rice**

En Route Athens, Greece, April 24, 2006

...SECRETARY RICE: I see Turkey as a very strong ally with a very strong orientation toward NATO and toward the European Union. I mean, that has been -- Turkey has been very active in pursuing its European accession and Europe has been active in pursuing that as well. It's not easy because the Turks are making a lot of changes at home. We have to remember that it's not just the rise of an Islamic party in Turkey, but in fact this has been a process of the evolution of democracy in Turkey with a much stronger democratic core than in the past. So there's an important evolution going inside of Turkey. There's an important evolution going on terms of Turkey's movement toward the European Union. It has always been a key anchor in NATO. But I think it's a very good thing that Turkey is being active in the Middle East. As I said, we have had no stronger supporter and ally in the Broader Middle East Initiative than Turkey, which sees the importance of not allowing people to even think about a clash of civilizations but rather to see these civilizations at unified by their democratic traditions and by their democratic future. ...

**Religious Freedom Important in Schools, Says U.S. Scholar**

**Jeremy Gunn discusses religious expression in schools, global community**

Washington File, April 24, 2006

Washington -- An American scholar who extensively has studied religious freedom in Europe and America believes schools should teach young people about the importance of religion as a motivator of human behavior, but unless they are private schools they should not espouse a particular religious belief.

"Many of the conflicts that exist in the world today [both in the United States and internationally] come from people not really understanding religion," said Jeremy Gunn during an April 24 webchat. "It is important to learn about it. The important thing, however, is that the state not attempt to indoctrinate children on religious matters." ...

[WEBCHAT TRANSCRIPT](#), "Religious Freedom in Schools", April 24, 2006

[\[back to top\]](#)

## CRS REPORTS FOR CONGRESS

### Congressional Research Service/ Library of Congress

#### [U.S.-European Union Trade Relations: Issues and Policy Challenges](#) (pdf)

Updated May 1, 2006

*Updated*

Major U.S.-EU trade challenges can be grouped into five categories: (1) complying with WTO rulings; (2) resolving longstanding trade disputes involving aerospace production subsidies and beef hormones; (3) dealing with different public concerns over new technologies and new industries; (4) fostering cooperative competition policies; and (5) strengthening the multilateral trading system.

#### [The United States and Europe: Current Issues](#) (pdf)

Updated April 6, 2006

*Updated*

The United States and Europe share a long and intertwined history. Despite the end of the Cold War, both sides of the Atlantic continue to face a common set of international concerns, have few other comparable partners, and share a huge economic relationship. Nevertheless, numerous foreign policy and trade conflicts have seriously challenged U.S.-European relations in recent years. This report examines the current state of the transatlantic relationship and key issues in Europe and beyond that have implications for U.S. interests.

#### [The European Union: Questions and Answers](#) (pdf)

Updated April 6, 2006

*Updated*

This report provides answers to key questions related to the European Union (EU). It describes the EU's evolution, its governing institutions, trade policy, and efforts to forge common foreign and defense policies. The report also addresses the EU-U.S. and EU-NATO relationships.

#### [The European Union in 2006 and Beyond](#) (pdf)

Updated April 6, 2006

*Updated*

The European Union (EU) has experienced significant changes over the last few years. The EU has enlarged from 15 to 25 members and has been working to implement a new constitutional treaty to institute internal reforms and further political integration. The EU has also taken steps toward developing a common foreign policy and defense arm. This report describes the current status of the EU's constitutional treaty, EU enlargement, the EU's evolving foreign and defense policies, and possible implications for U.S.-EU relations.

#### [European Union Enlargement](#) (pdf)

Updated April 6, 2006

*Updated*

On May 1, 2004, 10 states joined the European Union (EU), enlarging the Union to 25 members. The EU views the enlargement process as a historic opportunity to promote stability and prosperity in Europe. In addition to the 10 new members (Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia, and Slovenia), Bulgaria and Romania hope to accede to the EU in 2007. Turkey and Croatia began accession negotiations in October 2005. Macedonia was named as a candidate for EU membership in December 2005.

#### [The European Union's Constitution](#) (pdf)

*Updated*

Updated April 6, 2006

In June 2004, the European Union (EU) concluded work on a constitutional treaty that contains changes to the EU's governing institutions and decision-making processes. Commonly referred to as the "constitution," this new treaty aims to institute internal reforms to enable a larger EU to operate effectively and prevent gridlock, but it must be ratified by all member states to enter into force. The future of the EU's constitution, however, has been thrown in doubt after French and Dutch voters rejected it in separate referenda in May and June 2005. This report provides background information on the constitution, its key provisions, the current crisis, and possible implications for U.S.-EU relations.

### [The European Parliament](#) (pdf)

Updated March 30, 2006

The 732-member, directly-elected European Parliament (EP) is a key institution of the 25-member European Union (EU). Once limited to being a consultative assembly, the EP has accumulated more power over time. Currently, it plays a role in the EU's legislative and budgeting processes, and exercises general supervision over other EU bodies. The EP continues to face several challenges, however, especially in relation to its democratic legitimacy and operational costs. The most recent EP elections were held in June 2004.

### [European Union Biofuels Policy and Agriculture: An Overview](#) (pdf)

March 16, 2006

Several different economic and environmental forces have converged in recent years to generate growing interest in alternate sources of energy, including biofuels, within the European Union (EU). The European Commission (EC) is using both legislation and formal directives to promote biofuel production and use within the EU. However, EU biofuel production is impeded by its high production costs relative to fossil fuels. To date, the most important biofuel produced in the EU has been biodiesel with an 80% share of biofuel production in 2004. Bioethanol has accounted for the remainder. The major feedstock for EU biodiesel production is rapeseed oil, while bioethanol is generally produced using a combination of sugar beets and wheat. U.S. policymakers are closely watching EU biofuel developments, particularly for any successful policy choices that might work in the United States. In addition, both the production and use of biofuels have important long-run implications for EU agricultural production and trade. This report briefly introduces some of the more salient agricultural policies and issues related to EU biofuel production and use.

### [Agricultural Biotechnology: The U.S.-EU Dispute](#) (pdf)

Updated March 10, 2006

In May 2003, the United States, Canada, and Argentina challenged in World Trade Organization (WTO) dispute settlement the European Union's (EU's) de facto moratorium on biotechnology product approvals in place since 1998. Although the EU effectively lifted the moratorium in May 2004 by approving a genetically engineered (GE) corn variety, the three complainants pursued the case, in part because a number of EU member states continue to block approved biotech products. The moratorium reportedly cost U.S. corn growers some \$300 million in exports to the EU annually. The EU moratorium, U.S. officials also contend, threatened other agricultural exports not only to the EU, but also to other parts of the world where the EU approach to regulating agricultural biotechnology is taking hold. The EU approach presumes that the products of biotechnology are inherently different from their conventional counterparts and should be more closely regulated. On February 7, 2006, the WTO dispute panel, in its interim confidential report, ruled that a moratorium had existed, that bans on EU-approved GE crops in six EU member countries violated WTO rules, and that the EU failed to ensure that its approval procedures were conducted without "undue delay." Other claims by the United States were rejected.

### [European Union's Arms Embargo on China: Implications and Options for U.S. Policy](#) (pdf)

Updated January 26, 2006

Overall, there are two sets of questions for Congress in examining U.S. policy toward the fate of the EU's arms embargo on China. What are the implications for U.S. interests in trans-Atlantic relations and China? If U.S. interests are adversely affected, what are some options for Congress to discourage the EU from lifting its arms embargo on China and, if it is lifted, to protect U.S.

national security interests in both Asia and Europe? Issues raised by these questions are the subject of this CRS Report.

### [U.S.-EU Cooperation Against Terrorism](#) (pdf)

Updated January 24, 2006

The September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks gave new momentum to European Union (EU) initiatives to improve law enforcement cooperation against terrorism both among its 25 member states and with the United States. Washington has largely welcomed these efforts, recognizing that they may help root out terrorist cells and prevent future attacks. However, the United States and the EU continue to face several challenges as they seek to promote closer cooperation in the police, judicial, and border control fields. This report will be updated as needed.

### [The United States and Europe: Possible Options for U.S. Policy](#) (pdf)

Updated January 23, 2006

This report assesses the present state of the U.S.-European relationship and the reasons for current frictions. To stimulate debate and for the purposes of analysis, it also offers a spectrum of possible options for U.S. policymakers in considering the future shape of the political and strategic dimensions of the transatlantic partnership.

### [EU-U.S. Economic Ties: Framework, Scope, and Magnitude](#) (pdf)

Updated January 17, 2006

U.S. and EU policymakers will continually face the task of how to manage the increasingly complex bilateral economic relationship in ways that maximize benefits and keep frictions to a minimum. For Members of Congress it means weighing the benefits of greater economic integration against the costs to constituents in the context of overall U.S. national interests.

### [NATO and the European Union](#) (pdf)

Updated January 3, 2006

This report addresses several questions central to the debate over European security and the future of the broader transatlantic relationship.

[\[back to top\]](#)

## **MEDIA and THINK TANK ITEMS**

(If you are interested in receiving any of the articles listed below, please contact [arc@usembassy.at](mailto:arc@usembassy.at))

### **The Benefits of Brutality**

By Clive Crook, *The Atlantic Monthly*, May 2005

A subtler but equally important difference: in America, immigration policy divides and confuses the political parties, separating liberals from liberals, and conservatives from conservatives; in Europe, by contrast, it tends to unite the political tribes behind hardened positions. Second, immigration can impose a fiscal burden—the costs of health care and welfare payments for immigrants, schooling for their children, and so on. Natives press this last complaint far more vigorously, of course, if they fear (as many Europeans now do) that immigrant communities may actually harbor enemies of the host country.

### **Doha Round Death Spiral**

By Bruce Stokes, *National Journal*, May 6, 2006

*National Journal* columnist Stokes presents a pessimistic analysis of the status of the Doha Round of trade talks. The U.S. is demanding a 66-percent reduction in the European Union's agricultural tariffs, but Brussels insists that it can offer only 40 percent. The Americans and Europeans are looking for duties on most manufactured goods to be no higher than 15 percent, but Brazil and other developing countries insist on 22-25 percent. If this stalemate cannot be resolved, the expectation is that the round will be extended again to get past the French and American elections in 2007 and 2008. With the Doha Round thus "in the freezer," emphasis will shift to bilateral agreements and both American and European businesses will lose interest in restarting the Doha



Round. Stokes notes that there are plans to complete the Doha Round by midsummer, but that "it seems implausible... the more worrisome question is what will happen next."

## **The European Services Directive**

Juan Delgado, Research Fellow, Bruegel

U.S.-Europe Analysis Series, The Brookings Institution, April 2006

It is a truism that if you try to please everyone, you end up pleasing no-one. Europe's controversial Services Directive has arguably fallen into this trap. When it was passed on February 16, 2006 by the European Parliament, angry trade unionists gathered at the doors of the Parliament, protesting that the parliament had gone too far. Frustrated supporters of liberalization, for their part, dismissed it as a watered-down version of the original proposal that would do little to advance the goal of a single market for services in Europe.

The Services Directive aims to increase competition by eliminating restrictions on market access for service providers and by removing obstacles to the cross-border provision of services. Since the presentation of the first draft at the beginning of 2004, the directive has been the center of vigorous debate throughout Europe.

[FULL TEXT](#) (pdf)

## **And Yet It Moves: The European Constitutional Debate One Year Later**

By Ettore Greco, Visiting Fellow, Center on the U.S. and Europe, The Brookings Institution

U.S.-Europe Analysis Series, April 2006

In its not-so-long history, the European Union (EU) has known many *anni horribiles* marked by major events that brought about more or less prolonged crises. But the year 2005 will no doubt be recalled as one of the worst. The rejection of the constitutional treaty, which was signed in fall 2004, in referendums in France and in the Netherlands not only derailed a reform process that the European leaders had presented as crucial for the future of the EU, but also gave rise to a wider identity crisis over the meaning and purpose of the European Union.

Within this tumult, some signs have emerged of a fresh interest in reviving the process of constitutional reform. Prominent European political figures, including several heads of state or government, have presented their views on the possible way-outs of the deadlock over the constitutional treaty and pro-reform groups are now hopeful that the constitution can move forward this year. This signals a growing awareness that the period of reflection agreed upon at the June 2005 European Council, which has been unfruitful so far, needs to give way to new diplomatic initiatives.

[FULL TEXT](#) (pdf)

## **2006 Will Provide Clues to Europe's Future**

By Reginald Dale and Robin Niblett, *Euro-Focus*, Center for Strategic and International Studies, April 5, 2006

The defeat of the EU constitutional treaty in France and the Netherlands in May and June 2005 has left the EU in an institutional no-man's-land, unwilling to concede defeat but uncertain of how best to advance. In past times of crisis, the EU has found a way to relaunch the integration process, usually under Franco-German leadership. Today, while the EU remains in an institutional "period of reflection," the Franco-German partnership has lost steam, and the sense of collective mission that has driven the EU forward is challenged by the centrifugal forces of an enlarged EU and by generally weak economies.

[FULL TEXT](#) (pdf)

## **Industrial Lobbying within the European Union: Actors, Strategies, and Trends in the Multi-Level System**

By Stefanie John and Daniela Schwarzer

AICGS Policy Report #24, Spring 2006

In their report, Stefanie John and Daniela Schwarzer explore the complexities of lobbying and decisionmaking in the European Union, using the example of the automotive industry. They examine key differences between the lobbying processes of the EU and the United States, decipher the decision-making processes in the multi-level European system, and use a case study on emissions regulation to explore the structures and patterns of lobbying activities, pointing out the strategies that have been successful in the complex EU system. Stefanie John is a researcher at

the Ruhr-Universität Bochum (Germany) working on global economic governance with a special interest in national preference formation.

[FULL TEXT](#) (pdf)

## **The Stresses of Deep Integration: The Transatlantic Relationship's New Economic and Political Challenges**

By Bruce Stokes, AICGS Policy Report #23, Spring 2006

The transatlantic relationship—and U.S.-German ties—have never been closer economically nor more troubled politically. The bonds between Europe and the United States—and by extension America and Germany—are deep and strong. Yet the relationship faces unprecedented new stresses: public alienation, dangerous global economic imbalances, differing perspectives on the competitive challenge posed by China, and niggling confrontations over taxes or domestic regulation that were unheard of in the past but are directly attributable to the ongoing economic integration that has characterized the transatlantic marketplace in the last generation. A new government in Berlin affords a unique opportunity to reestablish a closer political and economic partnership, not only between Germany and the United States but also, with German leadership, between the United States and Europe. The challenge ahead is to mitigate current political frictions in the relationship to ensure that they do not impair the process of further deepening mutually beneficial economic integration. This process will require accommodation of values differences, bold new economic initiatives, and patience.

[FULL TEXT](#) (pdf)

## **Europe's Mosque Hysteria**

By Martin Walker, *The Wilson Quarterly*, Spring 2006

For the first time since the Ottoman Turks were hurled back at the siege of Vienna in 1683, Europe has been gripped by dark, even apocalyptic visions of a Muslim invasion. The Italian journalist Oriana Fallaci has sold more than a million copies of her 2004 book *The Force of Reason*, in which she passionately argues that "Europe is no longer Europe, it is 'Eurabia,' a colony of Islam, where the Islamic invasion does not proceed only in a physical sense but also in a mental and cultural sense." Here, Walker investigates Europe's Muslim hysteria.

## **As the Mideast Comes Apart, America and Europe Come Together**

By Philip H. Gordon, Director, Center on the United States and Europe, The Brookings Institution, *E!Sharp*, Spring 2006

Over the past several years, no region in the world provided better support for the thesis that America and Europe were drifting apart than the Middle East. The Iraq crisis was the most serious split in the Atlantic alliance for at least fifty years. On Iran, the US talked about an "axis of evil" while the Europeans wanted to trade and talk. On Israel-Palestine, Europeans denounced American "disengagement" from the peace process while Americans accused the Europeans of being soft on terrorism. Today, there are signs that this pattern is changing. The Middle East is coming apart – and Americans and Europeans are coming together.

[FULL TEXT](#)

## **Conflict Conundrums**

By Tim Potier, *The National Interest*, Spring 2006

Europe's unresolved disputes--Kosovo's bid for independence, the breakaway regions of Georgia--present the US and other global and regional powers with a policy dilemma: how to balance a people's call for autonomy with a desire to maintain the territorial integrity of existing states and preserve regional stability. A US decision to support autonomy in one area, such as Kosovo, could embolden demands for independence by other groups. Here, Potier remarks that US policymakers can either apply guiding principles in brokering or mediating those disputes, or consider each case independently in light of US geopolitical interests.

## **Europe and the United States: An Evolving Alliance.**

By Brenda B. Schoonover, *American Diplomacy*, March 24, 2006 (web exclusive)

Schoonover examines "several major factors which have affected transatlantic relations in recent years, such as the end of the Cold War, the recent advancements in communications technology, the integration of Europe and the growth and strength of the European Union, the increased

threat posed by global terrorism, particularly the events of September 11, 2001 and, transatlantic and global differences concerning the United States invasion in Iraq."

[FULL TEXT](#)

### **A New Look at U.S. and European Unemployment.**

By Robert Horn and Philip Heap, *Challenge*, March-April 2006

Despite ongoing structural reforms, many European countries continue to suffer high rates of unemployment relative to the United States. The authors argue that reported unemployment statistics for both the EU-15 countries and the United States understate the degree of unemployment. Their work is based on an "age-adjusted" unemployment rate, which takes into account changes in the age and gender structure of the population. But they argue that without these factors, the reported unemployment rate is a misleading measure of the strength of the economy.

### **Five Debates on International Development: The U.S. Perspective**

By Andrew S. Natsios, *Development Policy Review*, March 2006

"In Europe, the right approach to bilateral development assistance is increasingly the subject of an easy-going, not to say cosy, consensus. The number of 'like-minded' donors in Europe grows by the year. Looking as far afield as the US or Japan, it is possible to find major bilateral agencies that take a consciously different approach. Yet in European eyes, robust and articulate statements of these other views are infrequent and unconvincing at best. If this has been true, it is true no more. Andrew Natsios's speech published in the March issue of *Development Policy Review* is both forceful and persuasive. It makes some uncomfortable points about the current international consensus on aid effectiveness and aid instruments. It urges development agencies to follow USAID in setting their sights on the 'transformation' of societies, rather than narrowly on the millennium goals. This challenging argument provides, among other things, some of the less obvious background to the US State Department's recent adoption of 'transformational diplomacy' as its central mission. Right or wrong, Natsios in DPR is essential reading for those concerned with major current issues in aid policy."

[\[back to top\]](#)

## **AUSTRIAN GOVERNMENT ITEMS**

### **Event**

#### **[European Competition Day 2006](#)**

Competition Law and its Surroundings - Links and New Trends

Monday 19 June 2006 - Vienna

The Competition Day is already a traditional event organized by each EU Presidency. It is a platform to exchange views on competition policy and law for members of Competition Authorities, Ministries, Community Courts, the business community, lawyers and scientists. The Competition Day 2006 will be organised together by Austria and Finland - the two Presidencies of 2006. The focus of this year's Competition Day will be on mergers and merger control as well as on antitrust policy and on their surroundings.



[\[back to top\]](#)

## **Press Releases and Speeches**

(for a complete listing of press releases and speeches please see:

<http://www.eu2006.at/en/index.html>)

### **Presidency press statement on EU-China human rights dialogue**

EU and China hold 21st round of human rights dialogue

May 26, 2006

The European Union and China held the 21st round of the EU-China human rights dialogue on 25-26 May 2006. Meeting in Vienna, senior officials from the EU and China discussed in an open and constructive way a wide range of key human rights issues, focusing on the internal human rights situation in China, as well as co-operation on human rights in international fora. The human rights dialogue has been taking place on a bi-annual basis since 1995 and forms an essential part of overall EU-China relations. The Council of the EU has established a number of key areas of concern on which it wishes to see concrete progress on the ground in China. ...

### **17th EU-Russia Summit, Sochi, 25th May 2006**

May 25, 2006

The leaders of the EU and Russia met today in Sochi in Russia for the seventeenth EU-Russia summit. The friendly and open meeting focused on the practical implementation of the Road Maps for the Four Common Spaces as agreed at the previous EU-Russia Summit on 10 May 2005.

The leaders welcomed the ongoing work on the Common Economic Space (CES) which has the overall objective of bringing down barriers to trade and investment and promoting reforms and competitiveness, based on the principles of non-discrimination, transparency and good governance. The leaders underlined the strategic importance of co-operation on energy and the need to enhance EU-Russia energy relations. The EU side stressed the importance of reciprocity in terms of access to markets, infrastructure and investment. The leaders welcomed progress concerning Russia's WTO accession as a factor in establishing these core principles. Close attention was paid to the issue of climate change and questions of EU-Russia cooperation in the field of joint implementation. ...

### **EU Agriculture Council: GMO contamination of organic products controversial**

Pröll: Policy debate highlighted important role of organic agriculture

May 22, 2006

The threshold for the contamination of organic products with genetically modified organisms (GMO) was one of the more controversial issues when the EU Agriculture Ministers discussed the new EU regulation on organic production for the first time on Monday. At least 10 Member States at the Council called for the GMO threshold of 0.9% for conventional products to be formulated much more strictly for organic agriculture. Critics of gene technology, including Greece, Italy and Austria, were particularly vehement. ...

### **Plassnik: Montenegro – democratic decision about the future**

Foreign Minister Ursula Plassnik on the referendum in Montenegro

May 22, 2006

"The independence referendum in Montenegro is an important European signal: after the tragic developments in the Balkans in the 1990s, this referendum shows that the peoples of the region have learnt from the past and are now taking their decisions about the future peacefully and democratically", Foreign Minister Ursula Plassnik, President of the Council, declared today concerning the independence referendum in Montenegro.

According to the minister, this is also in part thanks to the efforts of the European Union. The EU, in particular Javier Solana and his personal representative for Montenegro, Miroslav Lajčák, had made a decisive contribution to ensuring the parties were able to agree democratic ground rules as a basis for deciding freely on their destiny. ...

### **Prokop opens "dialogue of cultures and religions"**

May 19, 2006

Minister of the Interior Liese Prokop opened an international conference on the "Dialogue of Cultures and Religions" at the Hofburg in Vienna on 19 May. "Through this conference we hope to continue the dialogue between people of different backgrounds, which already has a strong tradition in this country. However, within the framework of the EU Presidency, we also intend to make a contribution to implementing the EU strategy against radicalisation and recruiting", Prokop said....

### **Winkler: Successful round of talks on establishment of EU Fundamental Rights Agency**

State Secretary Hans Winkler in the European Parliament in Strasbourg

May 17, 2006

State Secretary Hans Winkler represented the Council Presidency at the second informal triologue with the European Commission and the European Parliament on the establishment of a European Fundamental Rights Agency.

According to Winkler, the "protection and the promotion of fundamental rights are fundamental political goals of the European Union. They are a prerequisite for stable societies based on functioning political institutions and efficient legal systems. Words alone are not enough, however. The Union's citizens need concrete measures. Appropriate structures must therefore be established and resources made available for protecting fundamental rights. This is precisely what we are seeking to do in establishing the Fundamental Rights Agency, which is a decisive development in expanding the protection of fundamental rights in the EU." ...

### **Plassnik: New phase in relations with Algeria**

Foreign Minister Ursula Plassnik chairs first Association Council EU-Algeria

May 15, 2006

Foreign Minister Ursula Plassnik today chaired the first Association Council with Algeria in her capacity as President of the Council of the EU.

"Today's first Association Council meeting with Algeria shows we have entered a new phase in our relations. Algeria is an important partner for security, stability and cooperation in the Mediterranean region. The association agreement that entered into force last September represents a new basis for our broad-based dialogue; we want to step up that dialogue on all levels, on themes ranging from the economy, energy and migration to consolidation of democracy and human rights", Plassnik said. ...

### **Plassnik: "EU and OSCE working together for security and democratic development"**

Foreign Minister chairs EU-OSCE Troika in Brussels

May 15, 2006

"The Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and the EU have a lot in common and their aims overlap to a considerable degree. Despite their differences, both are values-based societies", said Foreign Minister Ursula Plassnik during the meeting of the EU and OSCE Troika on the fringe of the External Affairs Council in Brussels. The OSCE Troika was presided over by the OSCE Chairman, the Belgian Foreign Minister Karel de Gucht.

"We are therefore endeavouring to deepen our cooperation, to which we want to add extra weight through a 'joint declaration'", stated Plassnik. ...

### **Plassnik: "Gulf Cooperation Council – much more than an economic partnership"**

Foreign Minister chairs ministerial meeting of the EU and the Gulf Cooperation Council in Brussels

May 15, 2006

On the fringe of the General Affairs and External Relations Council, Foreign Minister Plassnik chaired the ministerial meeting between the EU and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) on 15 May. The GCC comprises the United Arab Emirates (currently presiding), Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar and Oman.



“The states of the GCC are important partners of the EU. Our dialogue is broad-based and covers trade and energy matters, human rights and debates on current political issues. The Gulf region is a pivotal player in key issues of international policy and therefore has a particular responsibility, not only for the region, but also beyond. Against this background, we appreciate the stabilising role the GCC plays in the region. It is particularly valuable in view of the current challenges”, Plassnik said in her introductory remarks. ...

### **Declaration by the Presidency on behalf of the EU on measures by the Egyptian authorities against civil society activists**

May 15, 2006

Vienna, 15 May 2006 - The EU has followed with concern developments in Egypt, where several demonstrations have taken place in the context of the recent prolongation of the State of Emergency in Egypt as well as the ongoing disciplinary proceedings against two Egyptian judges for, inter alia, criticism relating to the conduct of the Egyptian Parliamentary elections of 2005. The scale of the police operation and the harsh manner in which these demonstrations have been policed appear as disproportionate. ...

### **Barroso: More EU funding for the Caribbean**

May 13, 2006

Following the EU-Cariforum summit which took place today in the framework of the IV EU-Latin America Summit in Vienna, European Commission President José Manuel Barroso announced a "substantial increase" of EU funding for the 10th EDF programme. He also promised an increase in direct EU assistance for the Caribbean and easier access to the existing funds. This is to be used above all to finance sustainable development of the region. Barroso also referred in his remarks to Europe's historical links with the Caribbean region. He said they should continue to be expanded and deepened in future. The EU itself hoped there would be further market integration between these two regions. Consequently, sugar and banana cultivation, an important sector of the Caribbean economy, had been another topic discussed. ...

### **Declaration of Vienna - IV EU-LAC SUMMIT**

May 12, 2006

IV EU-LAC SUMMIT

(Vienna, Austria, 12 May 2006)

DECLARATION OF VIENNA

STRENGTHENING THE BI-REGIONAL STRATEGIC ASSOCIATION

1. We, the Heads of State and Government of the European Union and of Latin America and the Caribbean, meeting in Vienna on May 12th 2006, reiterate our commitment to further promote and strengthen our bi-regional strategic partnership agreed at the previous Summits held in Rio de Janeiro in June 1999, Madrid in May 2002 and Guadalajara in May 2004.

2. We express our satisfaction with the positive results achieved at the IV EU-LAC Summit, which will contribute to the strengthening of our comprehensive, firm and mutually beneficial relationship. We will expand and deepen EU-LAC cooperation in all areas in a spirit of mutual respect, equality and solidarity. Building on our special historical and cultural links, we are determined to maximise the potential for joint action between our regions. ...

### **Federal Chancellor Schüssel: Together we achieved concrete results**

May 12, 2006

President of the European Council and Federal Chancellor Wolfgang Schüssel, Mexican President Vicente Fox Quesada, Peruvian President Alejandro Toledo Manrique, President of the European Commission José Manuel Barroso, and the High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy of the Council, Secretary-General Javier Solana, summarised the results of the working sessions of the Heads of State and Government in the framework of the IV EU-LAC summit at a press conference on Friday.

“We have seen and felt the curiosity towards one another that dominated this summit. We engaged each other critically, but in a spirit of friendship. We have agreed to concrete plans in the final document of the summit. ...

### **Bartenstein: Develop economic relations between EU and Latin America on a multilateral basis**

Some 500 business leaders and decision-makers have come to the first Europe-Latin America/Caribbean Business Summit in Vienna

May 12, 2006

"We need a solid, multilateral base in order to bring about a comprehensive and substantial development of economic relations between Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean countries. A successful conclusion of the Doha Round is of key importance to that end", Martin Bartenstein, Austria's Minister for Economics and Labour and President of the EU Council of Economics Ministers, declared today, Friday, at the first EU-Latin America/Caribbean Business Summit taking place in Vienna. Around 500 business leaders and decision-makers from all the participating countries are holding a meeting in parallel to the conference of Heads of State and Government. Bartenstein said it is important to speed up the negotiations in the WTO, as time is running out. ...

### **Plassnik: Women defenders of human rights need our special protection**

Foreign Minister Plassnik met women defenders of human rights from Mexico, Guatemala and Columbia

May 11, 2006

Foreign Minister Plassnik had a meeting yesterday with women defenders of human rights from Mexico, Guatemala and Columbia in order to have direct contact with women from Latin America before the summit begins. "It was important to me to get a personal, authentic assessment from these active women", she said. "The subject of human rights is firmly on the agenda for the EU-Latin America Summit. I will of course bring up these brave women's concerns in my discussions over the coming days. Human rights are a natural component of the close dialogue between Europe and Latin America", Plassnik declared. ...

### **Plassnik: "Help for the Palestinians – but no funding for violence and terrorism"**

Foreign Minister after the meeting of the Middle East Quartet in New York

May 10, 2006

"With its offer to the other partners in the Middle East Quartet to develop an international financing mechanism to channel humanitarian assistance to the Palestinians, the EU has affirmed its active role in the Middle East and its commitment to finding constructive solutions. This is also in tune with the Austrian Presidency's desire to work actively for tangible progress in the current critical situation in the Middle East", Foreign Minister Plassnik commented on her return from the meeting with the Quartet members USA, Russia and the United Nations in New York. "We are by no means indifferent to the fate of the Palestinians. With our offer of a temporary financing mechanism, we are demonstrating our concrete willingness to alleviate the suffering of the Palestinian people. At the same time it must be clear: we call on Hamas not to abdicate their responsibility towards the people who elected them. We demand they make a clear commitment to renounce violence and to the principles of a peace settlement in the Middle East – that means above all also recognising Israel's right to exist. There cannot and will not be any retreat from these demands of the international community. Any financing of violence or terrorism with EU resources is completely out of the question", Plassnik stressed. ...

### **Thousands of young people discuss Europe**

May 10, 2006

For Europe Day 2006, thousands of young people across Europe accepted the invitation to go to the cafés d'Europe. Yesterday, in 27 European capital cities, events focussing on dialogue with young people took place under the patronage of the Austrian EU Council Presidency, organised by the Institute of the Regions of Europe, and supported by various sponsors (Generali Versicherung AG, Österreichische Lotterien, Casinos Austria AG, Magna International Europe AG, mobilkom austria AG, Österreichische Volksbanken AG, Österreichische Nationalbank). 27 Cafés d'Europe were chosen as meeting places for lively discussions, literary exchanges and culinary "seduction".

Young people see their futures closely linked to that of Europe. They see opportunities and mobility, but do not hold back from airing their doubts and criticisms. Mobility, jobs, the environment and the rate of expansion are the topics which interest Europe's youth the most. ...

### **Plassnik: Peace agreement for Darfur is a big step forward**

Foreign Minister Plassnik in the UN Security Council

May 9, 2006

Vienna, 9 May 2006 - "The signing of the Darfur peace agreement by the government of Sudan and the rebel movement SPLA/M last Friday in Abuja is a big step forward for Darfur, for Sudan and for the whole of the African continent", Foreign Minister Plassnik, President of the Council of the EU, said on Tuesday in her speech to the UN Security Council in New York. "The Darfur peace agreement will smooth the way towards a fundamental improvement in the humanitarian situation and security conditions on the ground, towards protection of the civilian population, unrestricted deliveries of humanitarian aid as well as the restoration of lasting peace and reconciliation in the region." She also pointed out that the EU had supported the efforts of the African Union throughout the negotiation process. ...

### **Plassnik: Assuming responsibility for the path towards peace**

Foreign Minister at the Middle East Quartet Meeting in New York

May 8, 2006

"The EU intends to use the meeting of the Quartet during this difficult phase of the Middle East conflict to renew our offer to the parties involved to provide assistance in resolving the conflict", said Foreign Minister Ursula Plassnik before flying to the meeting of the Middle East Quartet in New York on 9 May 2006. "The objective is and remains the establishment of a two-state solution that enables all the people of the region to live in peace and security."

The Foreign Minister considers the meeting (scheduled within the framework of the Middle East Quartet) of the Quartet members the EU, the US, Russia and the United Nations with the Foreign Ministers of Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Jordan to be a major contribution towards involving the constructive forces of the region on the path to a lasting solution. ...

### **Plassnik: EU-Africa: Partners for Peace, Democracy and Development**

EU Foreign Ministers' Troika with Africa

May 8, 2006

The EU Foreign Ministers' Troika in the framework of the EU-Africa dialogue was held in Vienna today, 8 May. Participating in the meeting with Foreign Minister Ursula Plassnik were her counterpart from the Congo, Rodolphe Adada, as representative of the Presidency of the African Union, the Foreign Minister of Sudan, Lam Akol, and the Commissioners of the African Union for Economic Affairs, Maxwell Mkwezalamba, and for Peace and Security, Said Djinnit. Also in attendance were EU Commissioner for Development Cooperation, Louis Michel, Finnish Foreign Minister Erkki Tuomioja, Koen Vervaeke, Head of the Africa Task Force of the policy unit of the General Secretariat of the EU Council, and George Ajonye, representing the Nigerian Foreign Minister. ...

### **Vienna Declaration on Security Partnership**

May 5, 2006

A Ministerial Conference on the "Role of Internal Security in Relations between the EU and its Neighbours" was held on 4-5 May 2006 in Vienna, Austria.

At the initiative of Austria as the current Presidency of the EU Council, Member States of the European Union and its neighbouring countries met to discuss issues of common interest in relation to internal security.

The Neighbouring Arab Countries participated in the Conference. They emphasized that security is an issue of common interest. They expressed the importance of partnership for security with the EU in accordance with their respective objectives and priorities. They also underlined the need for further consultations on the modalities for such partnership.

The Russian Federation and the United States of America, as strategic partners of the European Union, participated in the Conference as observers. ...

### **Declaration by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union on the amnesty of convicted journalists by Algeria on the occasion of World Press Freedom Day**

May 5, 2006

Vienna, 5 May 2006 - The EU welcomes the amnesty issued by President Bouteflika on the occasion of World Press Freedom Day on behalf of convicted journalists. This measure

constitutes a positive signal as regards the willingness of the Algerian leadership to respect the freedom of the press. The EU hopes that this measure will be followed by a change in the practice of the application of the law on defamation in order to bring it in line with Algeria's obligations under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. ...

### **Prokop: Security dialogue EU/Russia/USA initiated**

Ministerial meeting EU/Russian Federation/USA in Vienna - concept and themes for tripartite security cooperation defined – expert meeting in autumn 2006

May 4, 2006

We have started a process of joint dialogue EU/Russia/USA in the area of internal security and thus achieved one of the Austrian Presidency's key goals“, Austria's Interior Minister Liese Prokop said today, Thursday. “Global threats such as terrorism, organised crime, drug trafficking and trafficking in human beings or illegal migration call for global responses.” She said she was very pleased that “we have today succeeded in defining the key principles and specific themes for future tripartite cooperation by the EU, Russia and the USA on internal security”. An expert meeting in the autumn and a formal meeting in the first half of 2007 are planned as the next steps. ...

### **Plassnik: "Concrete contribution to Congo's democratization"**

Ministerial Council decides on Austria's participation in EU support mission to Congo

May 4, 2006

Vienna, 4 May 2006 - "After decades of civil war and foreign military interventions the first free parliamentary and presidential elections will be held before the end of this year. Free and peaceful elections constitute an important step towards the stabilisation of this sorely afflicted country and thus of the entire region. The European Union is prepared to support the Congolese people in these efforts. As a consequence, the Austrian Federal Government decided today to send up to 10 members of the Austrian Armed Forces to the Democratic Republic of the Congo to serve as staff within the framework of an EU operation," said Foreign Minister Ursula Plassnik after the meeting of the Ministerial Council. ...

### **Declaration by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union concerning the Darfur talks**

May 4, 2006

Vienna, 4 May 2006 - The European Union (EU) commends the African Union (AU) and the Sudanese parties negotiating in Abuja for the progress achieved towards a peace agreement to settle the conflict in Darfur.

It welcomes the AU mediation's draft agreement, which it regards as constituting a good basis for a settlement. It welcomes the Sudanese Government's acceptance of this draft. It calls on the SLM/A and the JEM to reach a final agreement with the Sudanese Government along the lines of the mediation's draft, without further exceeding the deadline set by the AU. ...

### **Declaration by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union concerning developments in Nepal**

May 3, 2006

Vienna, 3 May 2006 - The European Union welcomes the first meeting in four years of the House of Representatives in Nepal and the decisions taken at that meeting. This is an important step towards full democracy and sustainable peace in the interest of the people of Nepal. The EU congratulates Girija Prasad Koirala on his appointment as Prime Minister. The EU welcomes steps taken towards the rapid formation of an effective government in Nepal. ...

### **Outreach seminar for countries of the Western Balkans on export control of conventional arms and dual-use items**

May 3, 2005

Austria as EU Presidency, SIPRI (Stockholm International Peace Research Institute) and the European Union are hosting an outreach seminar for countries of the Western Balkans which apply the criteria of the EU Code of Conduct on Arms Exports on the control of exports of conventional arms and dual use items, to take place on 4 May 2006 in Vienna.

The EU has intensified its cooperation with third countries in the area of export control of conventional arms and dual use items over recent years. ...

### **EU Presidency calls for ceasefire talks between the Government of Burma/Myanmar and KNU and for an end to abuses against civilians**

May 3, 2006

Vienna, 3 May 2006 - The EU Presidency is very concerned by the fact that the Myanmar/Burmese Army has recently stepped up its campaign against the Karen National Union (KNU). The fighting is reported to have created a significant number of displaced persons in northern Karen state, and contributed to a further significant movement of refugees to Thailand. The EU Presidency calls upon the Burmese leadership to cease abuses and dislocations of civilians in the zones of conflict and urges both sides to strictly adhere to international humanitarian law. ...

### **Commissioner Piebalgs and Minister Bartenstein clarify key points of the EU-Russia gas trade relationship in a letter to the Russian Government**

May 2, 2006

Today, Energy Commissioner Andris Piebalgs and Austrian Federal Minister for Economics and Labour, Martin Bartenstein, on behalf of the Presidency, have written to Russian Energy Minister Victor Khristenko, responding to recent comments that have been made in Russia regarding the EU energy market.

Commissioner Piebalgs and Minister Bartenstein acknowledge that Russia, and Gazprom in particular, have been, and remain, a reliable supplier of natural gas to the European Union. They consider it important that this relationship is maintained, given that the EU looks to Russia for increased deliveries of gas in the future. ...

### **Haubner: Where have all the children gone?**

International conference in Vienna on children's rights and the protection of children

May 2, 2006

The Austrian President of the Council, Ursula Haubner, is hosting a high-level conference of European experts - l'Europe de l'enfance - in Vienna. "Children and young people are key to Europe's future. They therefore have a correspondingly high priority for our Council Presidency", Haubner stressed.

Today in Vienna, representatives from 22 European Member States are discussing strategies for making political decisions taken at EU level compatible with the needs of young people in order to afford them the necessary protection, while also guaranteeing rights. ...

### **Plassnik: "Together for peace in the world"**

Foreign Minister Plassnik at informal EU-NATO meeting in Sofia

April 27, 2006

Vienna, 27 April 2006 - Foreign Minister Ursula Plassnik, President in office of the Council of the EU, is attending a meeting of foreign ministers from EU and NATO countries in Sofia.

"The EU and NATO have a strategic partnership. On security issues this encompasses crisis management in particular. That is why meetings like the one in Sofia are very useful, as they enable the ministers from EU and NATO countries to discuss topical security and foreign policy issues in an informal setting", Plassnik said before the meeting. ...

### **Plassnik: New initiatives for facilitating visas for the Western Balkan states**

The Foreign Minister welcomes the "flexible compromise solution" found by the EU Ministers for the Interior

April 27, 2006

Foreign Minister and EU Council President Ursula Plassnik welcomed today's compromise solution by the EU Ministers for the Interior on the question of Schengen visa fees. She stated that this "flexibly" takes into account the EU's special foreign policy interests.

Plassnik considers it very positive that certain groups of persons – minors, students and researchers – will no longer have to pay the visa fee anywhere in the Schengen area. ...



## **Presidency Statement on the detention and sentencing of Mr. Alexander Milinkevich**

April 27, 2006

Vienna, 27 April 2006 - The Presidency of the EU has learned with dismay about the arrest by the Belarusian authorities of Mr. Alexander Milinkevich and his sentencing to 15 days of imprisonment because of an alleged "active participation in an unauthorized event". The Presidency is of the opinion that Mr. Milinkevich exercised the fundamental right of free assembly and free speech. ...

## **15th EU-Japan Summit**

Joint EU and Japan press statement

April 26, 2006

1. Mr. Junichiro Koizumi, Prime Minister of Japan, Dr. Wolfgang Schäussel, Federal Chancellor of Austria, in his capacity as President of the European Council, assisted by High Representative Dr Javier Solana, and Mr. Jose Manuel Barroso, President of the European Commission, met in Tokyo on 24 April for the 15th Summit between Japan and the European Union.  
2. Summit leaders reaffirmed their desire to strengthen the partnership between Japan and the EU, global partners which share fundamental values such as democracy, the rule of law, human rights and the market economy and cooperate for peace, security and the prosperity of the international community. They reviewed the implementation of the Action Plan for EU-Japan Cooperation, adopted in 2001, and set priority actions to be taken by the time of the next EU-Japan Summit. ...

## **Main themes of the Informal Meeting of Health Ministers**

April 25, 2006

Main themes: Diabetes and women's health

The world has a population of around 6.5 billion people, 457 million of whom live in the EU, 300 million in the USA and 1.3 billion in China. Austria's initiatives relating to diabetes and women's health are therefore not limited to the EU. At the Informal Meeting of Health Ministers Maria Rauch-Kallat, Austria's Federal Minister for Health and Women, will also be looking for common ground with China and the USA. The EU health ministers will be joined in Vienna by the US Health Secretary Michael Leavitt and his Chinese counterpart Gao Qiang. The ministers participating in the two-day conference therefore represent over 2 billion people – one third of the entire world population. ...

## **Winkler: "The negotiations on the establishment of the European Fundamental Rights Agency are on the right road"**

State Secretary Hans Winkler at the European Parliament in Brussels

April 25, 2006

Brussels, 25 April 2006 - State Secretary Hans Winkler took part today as Council Presidency in the first informal trilogue on the establishment of the European Fundamental Rights Agency with the European Commission and the European Parliament.

"We have said from the outset that the establishment of an independent and effective agency, which we hope to see become operational from 1.1.2007, is essential for the credibility of protection of fundamental rights in Europe. We want to achieve this in particular by independence in reporting and through the establishment of an independent scientific council", Winkler said. ...

## **Third joint seminar of the EU and the members of the Gulf Cooperation Council on combating the financing of terrorism on 24 April 2006 in Brussels**

April 24, 2006

On 24 April, on the initiative of the Austrian Presidency of the EU, around 100 experts from the EU Member States and the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council (United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, Oman, Qatar and Kuwait) as well as observers from the USA, Japan, the World Bank, the IWF, the Council of Europe and the FATF attended the third joint seminar. Previous joint seminars have been held in Brussels in 2003 and in Abu Dhabi in 2005. The significance of the seminar can be measured by the fact that the Gulf Cooperation states were represented by more than 30 experts in Brussels. ...

## **Declaration by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union on the adoption of the constitutional law in Bosnia and Herzegovina**

April 24, 2006

Vienna, 24 April 2006 - In light of the upcoming vote of the Parliamentary Assembly of Bosnia and Herzegovina on the constitutional amendments proposed by the BiH Council of Ministers and endorsed by the BiH Presidency, the European Union welcomes the recent adoption of this important reform package by the Constitutional and Legal Committee of the BiH House of Representatives.

The EU reconfirms its support for the constitutional reform process in BiH which is a key element in the establishment of a modern, functional, self-sustainable and citizen-oriented multi-ethnic European state. ...

## **Mainoni and Verheugen: GMES will secure our future**

EU conference concretises the European space project

April 20, 2006

"Today is an important milestone in the creation of a European global system, the Global Monitoring for Environment and Security. During its Presidency of the EU Council, Austria has managed to concretise the second European user-orientated space project after Galileo", said Eduard Mainoni, State Secretary for Research, expressing satisfaction with the results of the GMES Conference in Graz at a joint press conference with EU Commission Vice-President Günter Verheugen. ...

[\[back to top\]](#)

## **EUROBAROMETER**

(published by the European Commission:

[http://ec.europa.eu/public\\_opinion/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/index_en.htm))

### **The Future of Europe**

Special Eurobarometer 251, published May 2006

In the aftermath of the French and Dutch "no" to the Constitution, a period of reflection was opened, based on introspection but also with the aim of closing the communication gap with citizens. This involves critically reviewing the European Union's successes and failures, with a view to re-launching European construction and preparing for Europe's future.

The launch in 2005 of "Plan D for Democracy, Dialogue and Debate" is evidence of this determination to develop an ongoing dialogue with European Union citizens in order to take onboard their concerns, hopes and ideas for the future of Europe. The adoption on 1 February last of the *White paper on a European Communication Policy* is a call for action on how we can close the gap between the EU and its citizens. Communication on Europe is a matter of democracy. In this context, the Directorate-General Communication has commissioned a wideranging Special Eurobarometer on the subject of Europe's future. To this end, almost 25 000 people in the 25 European Union Member States were interviewed, using the Eurobarometer surveys' methodology.

[FULL REPORT](#) (pdf)

### **The European Citizens and the Future of Europe**

Qualitative Study in the 25 Member States, published May 2006

The European Commission – Directorate General Communication – has wished to have a qualitative study carried out among citizens in the 25 Member States, on the subject of the future of Europe.

This study is part of the Commission's "plan D" aiming to listen more actively to citizens and to establish a dialogue with citizens.

Its main objectives are :

- To assess existing perceptions of and attitudes towards the European Union.
- To explore perceptions of EU achievements and failures.
- To analyse citizens' expectations of the Union.
- To analyse their attitudes regarding the functioning of the Union and its institutions

- To evaluate more widely information needs and expectations regarding citizens' involvement, in the light of the above mentioned themes.

[FULL REPORT](#) (pdf)

[\[back to top\]](#)

## USEFUL LINKS

### Government pages

- **U.S. – EU/ U.S. Embassy website**  
[http://www.usembassy.at/en/policy/us\\_eu.htm](http://www.usembassy.at/en/policy/us_eu.htm)
- **Western Europe/ Bureau of International Information Programs**  
[http://usinfo.state.gov/eur/europe\\_eurasia/us\\_eu\\_relations.html](http://usinfo.state.gov/eur/europe_eurasia/us_eu_relations.html)
- **Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs/ U.S. Department of State**  
<http://www.state.gov/p/eur/>  
The Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs, headed by Assistant Secretary Daniel Fried, implements U.S. foreign policy in Europe and Eurasia. The Bureau promotes U.S. interests in the region on issues such as national security, NATO enlargement, coordination with the European Union and other regional organizations, support for democracy, human rights, civil society, economic prosperity, the war on terrorism, and nonproliferation.
  - **European Union** - <http://www.state.gov/p/eur/rt/eu/>
- **Austrian Presidency of the Council of the EU** -  
<http://www.eu2006.at/en/index.html>
- **The United States Mission to the European Union** -  
<http://useu.usmission.gov/>
- **Delegation of the European Commission to the USA** -  
<http://www.eurunion.org/>
- **Europa – Gateway to the European Union**  
[http://europa.eu.int/index\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu.int/index_en.htm)
- **Eurobarometer**  
[http://europa.eu.int/comm/public\\_opinion/index\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu.int/comm/public_opinion/index_en.htm)

[\[back to top\]](#)

### Selected U.S. media with EU section

- **The Washington Post**  
International/ Europe: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/world/europe/index.html>
- **The New York Times**  
International/ Europe:  
<http://www.nytimes.com/pages/world/europe/index.html>
- **CNN**  
Europe: <http://www.cnn.com/WORLD/europe/archive/>

[\[back to top\]](#)

### Selected Austrian media with EU section

- **Der Standard**

European Union: <http://derstandard.at/?url=/?ressort=EU>

- **Die Presse**

Europe: <http://www.diepresse.com/taneu/eu.htm>

- **Wiener Zeitung**

Europe:

<http://www.wienerzeitung.at/DesktopDefault.aspx?TabID=3857&Alias=wzo>

[\[back to top\]](#)

#### **Additional sites**

- **EUpolitix:** <http://www.eupolitix.com/EN/>
- **EurActiv** – EU Policy News and Links: <http://www.euractiv.com/>
- **Eubusiness** – European Business News Online: <http://www.eubusiness.com/>
- **EU Reporter:** <http://www.eureporter.co.uk/>
- **EUobserver:** <http://euobserver.com/>
- **EuropaWorld:** <http://www.europaworld.org/>

[\[back to top\]](#)